

From the Upper Chamber



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Report for Friday, February 22, 2008

The twenty-second day of the 2008 legislative session was called to order by President Pro Tempore **Eric Johnson** of the 1st.

Senator **Don Balfour** of the 9th stated that the journal had been read and was found to be correct.

Senate Bills 502-508, Senate Resolutions 1006, 1007 and 1010-1012 and House Bills 611, 656, 1040, 1165 and 1223 were read for the first time and assigned to committees. The clerk then read the reports of standing committees and second readers.

After the morning roll call, Sen. **David Adelman** of the 42nd led the Senate in the Pledge of Allegiance. He then introduced the *Chaplain of the Day*, Rabbi **Ilan Feldman** of Congregation Beth Jacob in Atlanta, who led the Senate in the daily devotional.

Sen. **Joseph Carter** of the 13th took the well to announce today is the last day to submit requests for local assistance grants and to discuss SB 506, known as the *Student Health and Physical Education Act*, which asks local school systems to conduct physical fitness testing of students and to comply with state physical education instruction requirements.

Sen. **Rene Unterman** of the 45th took the well on a Point of Personal Privilege to acknowledge the passing of former Representative **Dorothy Felton**.

Lieutenant Governor **Casey Cagle** took the gavel to preside over the Senate.

Sen. **Johnson** took the well on a Point of Personal Privilege to reiterate the urgency of equalization funding for education concerning the state budget.

The Consent Calendar for Privileged Resolutions, consisting of SR 1003, 1004, 1008, 1009 and 1013-1015, was read and adopted.

Sen. **Lee Hawkins** of the 49th moved that HB 279 be withdrawn from the Appropriations Committee and recommitted to Health and Human Services Committee. There was no objection.

The Senate Local Consent Calendar, consisting of HB 1127, 1137 and 1182 was passed by a vote of 51 to 0.

The clerk read SB 363, which clarifies that the Commission of Dental Accreditation (CODA) accredits dental education programs in dental schools accredited by the Department of Education or hospitals by the Joint Commission.

Sen. **Hawkins** took the well to present the bill and Amendment 1, which makes several language clarifications.

Amendment 1 was adopted unanimously.

SB 363 passed as amended by a vote of 46 to 0.

The clerk read SB 371, which requires that local school districts conduct a survey of all existing school bus routes to determine that routes intersect with railroad crossings that do not have warning devices. The school districts would then submit a list of these dangerous crossings to the Georgia Department of Transportation (DOT).

Sen. **Doug Stoner** of the 6th took the well to present the Committee Substitute.

The Committee Substitute to SB 371 adopted unanimously.

SB 371 passed by substitute by a vote of 49 to 0.

The clerk read SB 402, which coordinates programs that provide rural and human service transportation services across the state through the creation of the Georgia Coordinating Council for Rural and Human Services Transportation.

Majority Leader **Tommie Williams** of the 19th took the well to the present the Committee Substitute.

Sen. **Gail Davenport** of the 44th took the rostrum to present the *Doctor of the Day*, Dr. **D. Ann Travis Honeycutt**.

The Committee Substitute to SB 402 was adopted unanimously.

SB 402 passed by substitute by a vote of 51 to 0.

Sen. **Jack Hill** of the 4th moved that the Senate disagree to the House Amendment to HB 989. There was no objection.

The clerk read SB 406, which increases penalties for reproducing recorded material. This bill was vetoed last year, and has since been revised to address the Governor's concerns.

Sen. **Bill Hamrick** of the 30th took the well to present the Committee Substitute.

The Committee Substitute to SB 406 was adopted unanimously.

SB 406 passed by substitute by a vote of 51 to 0.

Sen. **David Shafer** of the 48th asked that SB 408 be moved to the foot of the Calendar. There was no objection.

The Senate stood at ease to complete several amendments.

The clerk read SB 408, which amends code section concerning the ability of a telecommunications company to use eminent domain powers.

Sen. **Shafer** took the well to explain the Committee Substitute and Amendment 1, which allows counties that have an existing tax or fee exceeding three percent of actual recurring local service revenues to remain effective until December 31, 2012.

Amendment 1 was adopted unanimously.

The Committee Substitute to SB 408 was adopted unanimously as amended.

SB 408 passed by substitute by a vote of 42 to 4.

Sen. **Hill** of the 4th moved that the Senate adhere to its disagreement to the House Amendment to the Senate Substitute to HB 989, the Amended FY08 appropriations bill. There was no objection.

Lt. Gov. **Cagle** appointed a Conference Committee for HB 989, consisting of Senators **Johnson, Hill** of the 4th and **Williams**.

Following the announcements, Sen. **Johnson** moved that the Senate stand at ease until 5 p.m. and then adjourn until 10:00 a.m., Tuesday, February 26.

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